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*E. H. Richardson*

MEMORIAL

OF

ELIAS HUNTINGTON RICHARDSON,

PASTOR OF THE

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST,

NEW BRITAIN, CONN.

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HARTFORD, CONN.:

PRESS OF THE CASE, LOCKWOOD & BRAINARD COMPANY.

1883.



THIS TRIBUTE  
TO THE MEMORY OF OUR LATE PASTOR  
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY PRESENTED  
TO THE  
FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN NEW BRITAIN,  
AND  
TO ALL WHO HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED IN THE MASTER'S WORK  
WITH THE  
REV. E. H. RICHARDSON, D. D.,  
BY THOSE TO WHOM ITS PREPARATION WAS INTRUSTED.



## MEMORIAL.

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REV. ELIAS HUNTINGTON RICHARDSON, D.D., pastor of the First Church of Christ in New Britain, Connecticut, fell asleep on the twenty-seventh of June, 1883.

On Thursday, May seventeenth, he attended the anniversary exercises at the Theological Seminary in New Haven, and addressed the Alumni. This was his last public service. On the next day, at his home, he was stricken with pneumonia, from which, however, he so far recovered as to walk about the house and ride out. On Saturday, June sixteenth, he was seized with a chill, believed to be caused by blood-poisoning from an abscess in the lungs. Other chills followed. His strength failed, and he sank to rest at about three o'clock in the morning of the day first named above.

Dr. Richardson was born in Lebanon, N. H., August 11, 1827, was graduated from Dartmouth College in 1850, and pursued his theological studies in the seminary at Andover, Mass., completing the course in 1853.

May 15, 1854, he was married in Plainfield, N. H., to Jane M. Stevens, who, with four sons, survives him.

His first settlement in the ministry was in Goffstown, N. H., where he was ordained and installed May 18, 1854. In December, 1856, he was installed pastor of the First Church in Dover, N. H., and in December, 1863, of the Richmond Street Church in Providence, R. I. He became

pastor of the First church in Westfield, Mass., in 1867; of the First Church of Christ in Hartford, Conn., April 24, 1872; and of this church, January 7, 1878.

The funeral services occurred on Friday, June twenty-ninth. At ten o'clock prayer was offered at the residence of the family by Rev. G. H. Miner, pastor of the Baptist Church in this city. The body was then borne to the church, where, until the commencement of the public services, at two o'clock, an opportunity was given, of which many hundreds availed themselves, to look once more on the face of him who had been so widely respected and so much beloved.

The pulpit was appropriately draped in mourning. Beautiful floral offerings from the young people of the First Church in Hartford, from Catholic citizens, and from the Order of United American Mechanics, as well as from members of his own church and congregation, testified to the affectionate esteem in which the deceased pastor was held by those presenting them.

At the time fixed for the public services the church was filled. Many clergymen were present, and also delegations from the churches in Westfield and Hartford of which Dr. Richardson had been pastor.

The exercises were as follows:

A selected double quartette sang the hymn beginning, "Come, ye disconsolate," after which Rev. G. H. Miner read selections from the Scriptures. Prayer was then offered by Rev. Geo. L. Walker, D.D., pastor of the First Church, Hartford, and the choir sang "Jesus, lover of my soul." Rev. Nathaniel J. Burton, D.D., pastor of the Park Church, Hartford, then delivered the following address:

## ADDRESS OF THE REV. DR. BURTON.

I am here to testify of my admiration and my love for Elias H. Richardson, to mingle my lamentation with yours that he has left us, to bless God for his faithful, fruitful life, to rejoice in the Paradise which he has won, and to think of that sure-coming day when we may be with him again in the presence of God and His glory, as also in the presence of a company untold of earth-born creatures redeemed and brought home by the power and mercy of God. For, my brethren, and all ye mournful ones, it is not right for us to take a purely this-world view of such a death as this. On the earthly side there are clouds and tears, but man is a two-world being, and his earthly is to his heavenly as a moment is to a millenium, and to dwell only on this present state, and not permit that other estate to qualify our judgment of this and throw upon it its imperishable irradiations, were as though you should judge a grand orchestra by their miscellaneous preludings while they are laboriously tuning their many strings.

My admiration and my love, I said, for Dr. Richardson—both so strong that they would have brought me here to-day even if I had not been sent for.

It is no time now, pressed as we are by the duties of this sad occasion, to make a full analysis of his qualities and recite the full story of his honorable career; but I will, in a rapid way, touch some of those features of his constitution and character, which must occur directly to any one who knew him.

First—Speaking of his intellect, I will say I have always ranked him among our ablest men. He was a solid thinker, and what he thought he was able to express in terms of great affluence and of frequent beauty. I have had but few oppor-

tunities of listening to him in careful public discourse, but when I did it always occurred to me that if his mind had been more second-grade than it was, less disposed and less able to rationalize in general principles and more prone to reduce the stuff and stock of his utterance to particularizations, concretes, and all that ; and if, moreover, he had been less able, under the inspiration of his themes, to roll forth in a not unfrequent noble redundancy of diction, the rank and file of humanity who were privileged to hear him habitually would have been less strained to keep along with him than they sometimes must have been, I imagine. What a good thinking faculty he had ! I never knew him to deliver a really thin and weak address. Very likely he has, as we all do when we are tired, or half sick, or close pressed by our many duties, or a little disconsolate for some reason, but the habitual and average movement of his intellect was forceful, suggestive, and impressive. Even in the most sudden extemporizations he would not dribble, and scatter, and lose himself, and spurt forth unsubstantial things, but his faculties served him well, and some of the exhibitions of his capacity that I most vividly and gladly remember, were made on a momentary impulse when he was aroused by special circumstances.

I dwell fondly on these things now that that athletic and trained mind is taken from us, and those speaking lips are dumb. Dumb to us he is, but somewhere, and encompassed by some who will be glad to listen, he still speaks on the dear topics which inflamed his enthusiasm here, and made him a messenger of God unto the children of men. For no good thing goes to waste in the dominions of God, and the fine developments of this present life are certainly utilized along the great ranges of the Hereafter.

Secondly—But Dr. Richardson's intellect, whatever we may say in admiration of it, was not the major thing in him. In some men it is; they are all intellect and no character, and nothing much to love.

In an enumeration of his moral qualities, I should first mention, as very fundamental in the sum total of him, that he was a servant of God by conscious volition, and by habit. Long years ago he took his stand on that point of all points, and his individuality was fashioned thereby supremely, and to all eternity will be. As well analyze a flower, and in your analysis leave out the principle of life, without which no one would ever think of its being a flower at all, as to analyze this man, and omit this utterly resolved consecration of his. That made him a minister. That made him a good minister. That gave a specific character and a never-failing zest to the workings of his intellect. That breathed a suffusion through his entire personality. That marked out his life in its whole detail. Thank God for it. Thank God that he laid his hand on that New England boy and touched his heart and the springs of his will, and made him to be his resolved and indefatigable servant and apostle forever.

Of course this consecration of his showed itself in ways peculiar to his natural and hereditary make-up. For example, it came out in a more uniform seriousness, and a more unremitting moral intensity, than is manifested by some equally consecrated men. Dr. Richardson could laugh in a total movement of soul and body; he had some bedewings of humor, and he enjoyed the humor of his brethren; still he was principally occupied with the graver aspects of life, its solemn questions, its solemn duties, its stupendous liabilities, and the great destinies in which it eventuates; and I have sometimes thought that he would have increased his own

happiness and length of days, and at the same time not have decreased his usefulness if he could have kept himself less strung up, and strenuous, and morally responsible. This robust and unsleeping earnestness had its great uses, I need not say. It drew to him universal confidence and respect. It made his theological and other thinking determined and clear. It made his opinions steadfast. It gave him a ready answer to all questions of morals. He knew whether it was right to frequent theaters or not, and he knew every day in the year. Also he was outright and courageous in making known his views on all important subjects on proper occasions. These fine nobilities, I say, were secured by that high earnestness and tenseness, which was the prevailing feature of his constitution; and in a world too full of people frivolous and irresponsible and unpurposed, it does not become us to criticise such a man very much; still I fancy we might have had him longer, and might have more enjoyed his enjoyment of life if he could, so to speak, have slackened his heroic conscience a little, and his wiry vigor, and his manful push, and push.

But let us pass on to other traits, and get in all our data, before we generalize much on Dr. Richardson.

I spoke of his firm opinions, but right along side of that there lay a catholicity and a toleration of others' ideas and judgments, as broad and brotherly as you could ask. He was a Congregationalist, but it never occurred to him to persecute a Baptist, or a Methodist, or a Romanist, or take any mean advantage of them. And what is more and harder, he did not in the least disrelish his Congregational brethren who might dissent from this or that in his theology. Let that be said for him.

Let it be said, too, that he always sought his ends straight-

forwardly. Guile was absolutely impossible to his fine nature.

Also that he was pure. He looked it. His spare physique, his uncarnal face, his honest outlook, his prevailing intellectualism as your eye rested on him, told the story of a man unsmirched, and impossible to be tampered with.

Also he had, in large measure, that which we may call magnanimity. I have said as much as that already, I suppose, but I want to mention it again, and lead you on to a wider conception of that thing in him than you could get from my saying that he was broad-minded and charitable towards the opinions of other men, or from my saying that he was unguileful and the like. He was magnanimous. Not large-minded; that isn't it. The devil is large-minded. Not that, but large-natured; large in his feeling, large in his way of dealing with things. Now, millions of people seem reasonably magnanimous in ordinary life, but the moment they are subjected to the pressure of a supreme test, they squeak forth into some littleness. They get very poor, and cheat. They are heavily ridiculed, and then lie. They see a friend sinking into universal disrepute on account of something that is really an honor to him, and they speak not a word in his defence and perhaps join his enemies. They are invited to accept an honor in disrespect of the rights of another man, and they accept it. They and a whole ship's company are in extreme peril, and their entire nature, under the stress of fear, is suddenly corrupted into absolute, unthinking selfishness. Or they are sorely wronged by some one and become so demonized by resentment that no act is so ignoble or unclean that they will not resort to it.

I run through this scandalous list of familiar human infirmities, in order to say that our friend could not be forced

into any such things. I saw him once when he was indignant and grieved by a certain thing which had been done bearing on him, and when there was a good opportunity to be resentful toward me, for it looked as though I had had some hand in it; but after a little shaking in the wind and a little feeling around to see where he was, he emerged in as sweet a magnanimity as I ever saw. I shall never forget it. I learned more of his essential royalty in half an hour than I might have learned in years. He exonerated me. He spoke of the one who was really to be blamed with entire kindness. He confessed to me that for a few moments he had been tempted to act on his indignation, but rejoiced that now he had chosen the larger way; the way that is of patience under wrong, and a discharge from one's memory of the ever recurring inevitable frictions of life and society.

I have no time to illustrate further. Many things crowd upon me to be said, but I cannot say them. I congratulate you all that your friend was what he was. I congratulate his sons that they have had such a father, and his wife that it has been her's to have such an one, and this congregation that they could have such a man for their minister, though it was but for a time, and this community that they have enjoyed such a citizen, and the Congregational ministers of Connecticut that they have lived in the fellowship of a man so admirable and lovable, and the several churches near and afar, where he has served, that they have had his service, his right-minded, strong-minded, and unimpeachable service; a service whose fruitage God will not permit to fail; and I congratulate our New England homes that they do still rear these well-built and formidable men, these specimens of primitive force, these cultured and modulated Puritans, these clear-voiced theologians, these preachers with the thunders

of the Old Testament in them, and the melodies of the New, these square-cut granite corner stones of society and the State, these sons of the Lord God Almighty, and heirs of eternal life; what an element they will be in the constitution of heaven; how reverent their strong voices when they sing the song of Moses and the Lamb; how solid their holiness; how masculine and abounding their eternal service; how all heaven will inevitably nucleate around these stalwart elements, from whatever homes in all the broad earth they come, even as here on earth all history has pivoted on their vigor, their loyalty to God, and their perdurable toughness in the crush and crash of Fate.

In these strong words concerning men like Dr. Richardson, I hope I have not done injustice to those gentle attributes which they often possess, and to that beautiful culture with which they are often adorned. What culture is there so satisfying as that which is laid on substantial and massive character, and what gentleness is there so gentle and heart-melting as that of thoroughly characterized and powerful men. If we might, on this public occasion, invade the privacies of Dr. Richardson's life, we could show his mellowness, his tender fidelities, his suffusions of sentiment, and all those kindly and heart-warm things which are like the vines, grasses, and flowers that soften and beautify the rock-ribbed structure of the globe on which we live.

But I cease from utterance and leave you to your own thoughts. You will not forget this man. His family cannot. Those here to whom he has really ministered cannot. Some of you have had your minds cleared by his instructions; some of you have been strengthened for the struggle of life by his exhortations and his expositions of God's truth; some of you have been comforted in your great sorrows by his

good words; some of you have found your way to Christ by his leadings; he has buried your dead and baptized your children, and pronounced the benediction of God on your bridals; and while stars shine, or rivers roll, or the human heart is true, many of you will often recall this dear man whom we are compelled now to bury, but whom, please God, we shall see again when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, and death is swallowed up of life. Amen.

At the close of the address prayer was offered by Rev. W. L. Gage, D.D., pastor of the Pearl Street Church, Hartford. This was followed by singing, "We shall meet beyond the river," and the benediction was pronounced by Rev. M. B. Boardman, a member of this Church.

The body was borne from the church by Deacons Strong, Blake, Northend, Hungerford, Clary, and Davison, and prayer was offered at the grave by Rev. J. H. Twichell, pastor of Asylum Hill Church, Hartford.

In the evening of the same day, in place of the usual lecture preparatory to the communion, a memorial service was held in the chapel, at which appropriate remarks were made by the leader, Rev. M. B. Boardman, by Rev. G. H. Miner, and by others. The following minute, prepared and presented by order of the Church Committee, was unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, our Heavenly Father has seen fit sorely to afflict us by removing from us our beloved pastor, this church adopts the following minute and directs that it be entered on its records as a recognition of the fidelity of our pastor and friend, and a token of our grateful appreciation of that strong affection which made it his dying request that he might be laid to rest among this people:

Rev. Elias H. Richardson, D.D., since January 7, 1878, the beloved pastor of this church, entered into rest June 27, 1883, in the 56th year of his age. The ministrations to this people of another of God's servants are ended, and we lift our hearts to the great Head of the Church for grace, wisdom, and guidance.

The ministry now terminated has been marked by great fervor, tenderness, and love on the part of the pastor, and by affection and unanimity on the part of his people; consequently it has been an era of prosperity and spiritual upbuilding for this church, now so sorely bereaved.

From the time of his settlement here, while laboring earnestly to promote the welfare of the church, he has always been ready to do all in his power to lift up and encourage the weak, relieve the distressed, comfort the afflicted, reclaim the wandering, and stimulate all to strive for spiritual growth.

While this afflictive dispensation falls with special weight on this church, we feel that the city has suffered a great loss in the removal of one whose influence was powerful for the promotion of every good object, and the suppression of everything tending to wrong.

It would have been our will that a relation so endearing as that between Dr. Richardson and his people should have continued, but as it has pleased God to remove our standard-bearer, we remember with grateful hearts His goodness to us in the past, and commit our interests to Him in the future.

To the stricken wife, from whom a loving husband has been removed, and to the children bereft of a fond father, we extend our tenderest sympathy."

On the Sabbath following the funeral, memorial discourses were delivered in Hartford by Rev. Geo. L. Walker, D.D., and W. L. Gage, D.D. The latter, by request, was repeated in the pulpit lately occupied by Dr. Richardson, on the 23d of September.

This, and an extract from the discourse of Rev. Dr. Walker, are here given.

## ADDRESS BY REV. W. L. GAGE, D.D.

Among the dead of this year, in this immediate neighborhood, known in Hartford and all the towns adjacent, as well as here in New Britain, has been Elias Huntington Richardson. Of this man can be said, as was said of the late Rev. Prof. Johnson of Hartford, that he is remembered with peculiar affection. He was for seven years the pastor of our oldest Hartford church, and while in that high office he adorned the pulpit by the display of those graces which are distinctively and beautifully Christian. By those who knew him well he is remembered as a most interesting representative of precisely that which a Christian minister is bound to display,—meekness, simplicity, candor, purity, unselfishness, and enthusiasm for souls. My own recollection of these qualities in him is made the more vivid by those occasional bursts of impatience, of righteous anger, of rigorous criticism, in which the deep force of his nature showed itself; a certain violence and volcanic impetuosity which of late years never appeared in his public addresses, save as the normal and regulated heat and fire of his eloquent passages. Strange to say, this most modest and meek of men was in his first ministerial years a preacher of such stress, such excited and impassioned speech, that his voice not infrequently rose to a pitch that was painful to his hearers, and his denunciations were so eager as to call out a kind of reaction as if from overstatements and unintentional misapprehensions of fact. In ten years or so all this passed away, and it was common to speak of him as the St. John of the pulpit. From that time to this, there has been but one voice regarding his beautiful and almost saintly spirit.

My own acquaintance with Dr., then Mr. Richardson, began in the year 1856, twenty-seven years ago. He had just been

settled in the small town of Goffstown, N. H., and I was pastor of the Unitarian Church in Manchester, just adjoining. But in the wide divergences which separated a Unitarian and a Congregational minister in those days, we should probably not have met, save from the fact that that same village of Goffstown had been my mother's birth-place, and the home of many of my maternal relatives. In the house of one of these, a sister of my mother, Mr. Richardson was an inmate for a considerable period, and to that house he brought his bride. My own mother died while I was in Europe in 1855, and it was at my aunt's house in Goffstown that my father met the Richardsons, and out of the acquaintance there formed grew his second marriage with Mrs. Richardson's sister. This event threw me, of course, into intimate relations with Mr. Richardson. We were very good friends, I think, though we were very violent opponents. Our controversies often ran so high that it was hard to see how we could ever come to any kind of peaceable terms again. I have no doubt that in those encounters I gave him abundant occasion for his vehemence. His ministry in this pleasant town lasted for about two years and a half, and I find in my annual visits to my friends that he is still vividly remembered, although his best qualities had by no means matured at that time. He was, however, a hard student and a close thinker ; he showed, even then, that close logical power, and that ready skill in handling his thoughts and putting them into most copious expression, which are so well remembered with us. His sincerity, his earnestness, his love of men, his faithfulness, all these came to light in that early ministry ; his mental culture went on, his moral culture kept pace with it, and there were not wanting some bright minds among those good people, who even then dis-

cerned the great qualities which were stored away in that earnest man.

At length, after about two and a half years, they were surprised to hear that their pastor had been called to the old and strong First Church in Dover, N. H., one of those large and influential congregations whose origin was in the early days of New England, and whose strength had gone on increasing for over two hundred years. It was a noble position; in the audience were many men of fine talents, and at once the reserves of Mr. Richardson began to appear. In the town lived John P. Hale, a man of national reputation, both as lawyer and politician, at that time perhaps the most illustrious name in the U. S. Senate. Other men were grouped around him in Dover, not greatly Mr. Hale's inferior in mental power. This piqued and spurred the young pastor to his best, and I have seldom in my life heard such addresses as he used to give. He was greatly beloved as well as respected; his church contained a few of those men whose strength lies in their goodness, who believe in the Church and its mission, and in Christian work, and in the humble Christian virtues, and it was with those men that Mr. Richardson found himself most at home; they were his constant and nearest intimates; while the men of intellect in his congregation, many of them not members of the Church, stimulated his mind and drew out his most brilliant powers. I had the most abundant opportunities of knowing him then, for I had come out from the Unitarians, and was then pastor of the Old North Church in Portsmouth, N. H., only eight miles from Dover, and Mr. Richardson was one of my nearest ministerial friends. We exchanged pulpits frequently, and were much together besides. He rejoiced in my settled Trinitarian convictions, and was of constant help

to me in those years while I was rejoicing in the truth which from that time to this I have preached. He was a delightful man, full of stimulation, of new thoughts, enthusiastic plans. Every good thing was dear to him; every good man was precious to him. Those seven years abounded in pleasantness, and he carried the memory of his Dover pastorate ever after in his heart of hearts. He had lost the excitability and over-vehemence of his early pastorate, he had begun to understand man and men better, he had acquired catholicity of feeling and had entered upon his best manhood. Here his Arthur was born and his home became more full than ever of household joy. He was always a singularly domestic man. He was never happy away from his wife and children; he was always happy with them. It was probably the highest of all his reasons for gratitude that his marriage was one of ideal happiness; it was apparently unclouded by a film. It has remained so to the end, and with his four boys he has to his latest day been constantly renewing his youth and his life.

Never could father be more to his sons than Mr. Richardson to his. With them he was perfectly at home. Not making himself boyish, he was yet always a boy; and the blending of his constant dignity with that lovely simplicity of character, made one think of the blessing of Jesus upon those who become as little children. As was said of Bunsen, he had the brain of a man with the heart of a child. And so his boys loved him best of all comrades; for he felt as they felt; he did not have to come down to them; there was that inextinguishable youngness in him which gave them the benefit of his wisdom, while they shared his enthusiasm and overflow of life. His sons will remember him to their last days, certainly the three oldest, as the cheeriest and brightest and most delightful of companions.

Mr. Richardson was just what one would call a charming man. He was open, enthusiastic, youthful, playful, a lover of nature, a great walker, athletic in every sense, a hater of all shams, a friend of men, and the more unconventional the man, the greater his love; an admirer of all workers and of all people who have any mission and any needed place in the world. If there was a spark of earnestness in his neighborhood he would be sure to find it out. I never detected in him a lurking particle of sympathy with that which is gross, coarse, or sensual; he always seemed to be as pure as the air and the light. A simple-hearted, naturally joyous, honest, earnest man, wearing all these qualities so clearly that they were refreshingly and charmingly apparent; and yet not a man to be cheated or cajoled; not a man whom confidence men of any kind would select as an easy victim. He was so good that he repelled all bad elements from him.

Yet he was prudent, sagacious, careful; a man who looked forward and made provision for the coming time; full of worldly wisdom of the right sort; practical, with good sense and with the judgment to counsel others, and I think he would have been a good business man had he turned that way; and he was no worse a minister that he was a model in those things which become men of affairs.

He spent his seven years at Dover calmly and wisely, and then came the invitation to Providence. How well I remember the anxious hours spent over that call; nay, the anxious days and weeks. It was from a small New England city to one of the largest and best known; it was to a considerable increase in salary, and that meant more ease in living, more enjoyment of books and travel, more advantages for his family, more of that which makes life desirable. I do not

know that he can be said to have made a mistake in going, for the road lay through Providence to Westfield, Hartford, and New Britain. Yet it was not a pleasant pastorate; it was a three years' stay where what was best in him was not revealed.

A fragment of the congregation had not chosen him as its favorite candidate, and after his induction into the office to which he had been almost unanimously called, this slender minority did not fail to remind him of its existence. The effect was like the introduction of a bit of sand into a watch, for Mr. Richardson was one of the most sensitive of men, and the existence of friction in any form jarred on every chord of his most finely-strung and responsive soul. Other men would have been roused to a defiant resistance; he simply grieved and suffered. But he did not show what he was. And to his dying day, while remembering gratefully many cherished friends, he could not repress the memory of the chill which came to his best forces from some who did not give him what a minister has a right to expect from every member of his church. Yet despite this, he left the church stronger than he found it, and departed with the esteem of the entire city.

At the end of these four years he was called to Westfield, where he had a delightful pastorate of about five years, following Dr. Emerson Davis, one of the grand old patriarchal ministers of Massachusetts, and having the young Harry Hopkins as his neighbor minister in the Second Congregational Church. I do not think that he was quite so happy here as at Dover, for he had those trials which may be found in a parish made up of men widely varying in culture and in views of life. But he did enjoy in Westfield some of the warmest and most stimulative friendships of his life. That rare power of drawing the love and confidence of men

was wonderfully displayed in Westfield. He stood high among the ministers of that region. An address of his, given extemporaneously at a temperance gathering in one of the towns of the Connecticut valley, is still referred to as one of extraordinary eloquence; one which would rival the greatest speeches of the greatest men. His powers had reached their finest; his nature had expanded to its broadest. He became at this time a student of Emerson, and the rest of his life bore the fruit of this affluent culture, which, without in the least undermining his piety or his settled theological principles, gave color and brilliancy to all his sentences. Mr. Richardson became a wide, thorough, and discriminating reader; not in theological lines alone, but in all the best and most helpful authors. He was not much seen at lectures and concerts, but he was very much in his library, and he kept up intimate relations with the greatest and kingliest spirits of our age and the past.

In due time he came to Hartford. In this again, strangely, his life intertwines with my own. When I was settled there he gave me the charge. I well remember it, and doubtless others do who heard it more than fifteen years ago. His theme was "Have the same mind in you which was in Christ," and he developed it in an original and delightful manner, quite unlike the tone of most charges to ministers. This admirable address was remembered by some of the leading spirits of the Center Church, and by-and-by, when there was a vacancy in that honorable pulpit, inquiries were made about the slight, spirited, spirituel minister who had given that beautiful charge. This led to an interview; this to a call; and in good time Mr. Richardson, soon Dr. Richardson, was with us. Of his seven years' ministry in Hartford there is no need that I speak. How he endeared

himself especially to the enfeebled, the young, the disfavored classes ; how he wrought in the great Moody meetings ; how meekly, quietly, earnestly, lovingly, he took his place in all good words and works, is well remembered. With what dignity he passed from the First Church in Hartford to the First Church in New Britain, we all recall. That he was not in his whole make-up quite so well adapted to the atmosphere of the one church as to that of the other, has been demonstrated by the extraordinary success of his ministry in New Britain. Here he could show better than in Hartford his intense interest in men who are engaged in the strenuous toils of manufacturing life. If there was one thing about Dr. Richardson which was striking, it was his democratic spirit—his love of working men ; he had the enthusiasm of humanity at heart more than almost any person whom I ever knew ; and if he could find men in their shop aprons, and with grimy hands, it drew him all the more. The hundreds of persons, Catholic and Protestant, who passed by his coffin, bore tribute to the affection felt towards him by the working men of New Britain. He had in his church there just what made his life happy : many men of very uncommon intelligence, college trained men, lawyers, physicians, teachers, and a great number of those who work in iron, and steel, and brass, and wood,—skilled men, plain in all their habits, the bone and sinew of society ; and these and their families, constituting a large and prosperous church, made his life full, yes, brimming with happiness. All his best gifts were appreciated and stimulated. In his own church he was tenderly loved, in the community he was universally respected. The strongest men in New Britain were the men who recognized in him a splendid intellect as well as what all saw, a

noble heart. His eye for the beauties of scenery was constantly trained, and there was not a road for a dozen miles around which he had not traversed on foot, seeking and knowing the finest trees, the most beautiful outlooks, the loveliest glades and woods. His theological studies grew more and more thorough, and he was constantly wanted to give utterance to the result of his special researches. When a few years ago we sought a man who should best sum up Dr. Bushnell's theology, Dr. Richardson was the man selected; when again we required a man who could best express what is commonly called the moral theory of the Atonement, he was the chosen one. In both cases he, with characteristic modesty, declined.

Physically he was cast in a fine mould. All muscle, not a spare ounce of fat upon him, he was like steel wire; and it was his boast that scarcely any man could be found who had been obliged to give up preaching fewer Sundays than he. He could always rely on that steel-like frame, and could out-tire almost all other men. It was the standing jest of his home that his slight figure called forth constant apprehensions of his premature decline, and constant sympathy with his apparently over-wrought powers; and when one thinks how vital he was; at what a rate he could talk, hour after hour, on high and kindly themes, it is wonderful how strong and sound he kept himself all through the nine and twenty years of his ministry.

In these latest years I have seen less, far less of him, than in those earlier ones. It is the old story, those whom you can see at any time, you do not always see the most. But I have watched his course with great interest, noted his public sayings, rejoiced in his successes. And especially have I delighted in this last crowning ministry at New Britain,

which has been of undoubted joy and peace. Out of it, in mid-career, he has been translated, leaving the glorious trail of precious qualities and precious memories behind. If he has an enemy on the earth I know not where he is to be found. If there be a man who denies that he had almost apostolic piety, I do not know his name. If there be a brother minister who has not acknowledged him to be a master spirit, signally gifted, most acute, logical, and tenacious, I have not met him. He was not an ardent sectarian; his Christianity was much larger than his churchism; he was not bigoted but he became more lovely and sweet-hearted all his life. When he was younger his personal prejudices used to be distinct and uttered with a good deal of warmth; these too were modulated in the later years, as he came to know men better and make allowances for them. That a nature so intense as his could be so charitable, that a nature so sensitive could be so magnanimous, that a nature so proud could be so humble, this was the wonder of his character, this was the Christian part. It was because he himself had the mind of Christ, that in his charge to me when I began my ministry in Hartford, he bade me "Have the mind of Christ." And so when we think of him it is as the Christian that we remember him. I might recall a dozen eminent ministers, whose names suggest wit, knowledge, brilliancy, and other traits more or less pungent and attractive, but as you think of our friend, as in your imagination you see him pass before you, as you all can and will while I speak to you, you see in him the Christian,—the meek, modest, sincere, earnest, faithful, self-forgetting Christian. It is a sweet vision which I call before your memory, that sharply cut, pure, and in these latter years, distinguished face, that lithe, athletic form, the movement not so free and plastic as we

could wish, but the air always modest and quiet. How little of self-assertion as he moved. How little of swell or bombast as he spoke. Christ's own man, in word, in truth, in deed. A consistent, every-day Christian, a rounded, beautiful life. As I remember him, a very human kind of man, merry, light-hearted, jocose. It was always an unsettled point between us which wrote the worse hand and we never met without having to translate some undecipherable passage in each other's letters, over which we had of course our frequent bursts of laughter, especially when we were unable to read our own writing. A dear, human man, and yet always a true servant of Christ. Not infrequently cast down with cares, and looking out over the future with a kind of doubtful uneasiness; yet soon rallying and mounting up on eagle's wings of hope and confidence. I am glad to speak to many to-night who have known and loved him; who have been delighted to recall his goodness and retrace his power; to some, it may be, who through him have found the way to God, and rejoice in Jesus through his precious ministry. You will not forget him. You will not cease to pray for his household, for that wife so endeared to hundreds among you, for those sons, no one\* of whom bears the father's name, but all of whom we trust will wear his graces and shine in the luster of his untarnished character.

I have said almost nothing about his earlier years, for I have seldom heard him speak of them. He was fifty-six years old, and was a native of New Hampshire, I think of the town of Lebanon, on the Connecticut river just opposite White River Junction. He was a farmer's son, and the first years of his life he spent amid the scenes of the country.

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\* At Dover he lost a little child of ten months, the first born, to whom was given the father's name, Elias.

This gave him that inextinguishable love of nature which appeared in all his talk, his sermons, and his letters. In due time he went to Dartmouth College, a few miles to the north of his birthplace, and got a start in his learning. He never was very fond of his college, and I did not know of his visiting it frequently. I think his best learning came in his later years ; but he did become a close student of books and read like one who knew how to use them. Yet I do not think of him so much as a scholar as I do a man of fresh, original thought, breaking out all the time, at the table, in walks, in the study, in the vacation leisure. Electric, quickening, pungent, overflowing, that was the quality of his temperament, and he was one of the most stimulative of all the men whom I have known.

In Hartford he will probably best be remembered as pastor. I do not think he ever did his best pulpit work in that city ; he did not enjoy the precipice on which he had to stand and from which he had to speak, and although he loved his work and his people, I think that in Dover, in Westfield, and in New Britain, he did better justice to his ample gifts. But as pastor he was at his best in Hartford, and moved to and fro, winning confidence, love, and respect, not alone to himself but to religion. He was a man formed to be loved ; and in the society of the young and of the hundreds who rejoiced in his simple-hearted, fresh, childlike, and affectionate ways, he found himself at home and at peace. I suppose all who knew him could see that he was a very human kind of man, that he had naturally a great deal of what we call sensitiveness, but the work of grace was wrought in him to an extraordinary degree, and you could not be with him an hour without feeling that he was a man of truth, of prayer, a man whose life was formed for inestimable services,

and that he walked with God. So that with all your sense of a good deal of human nature in him, your one surviving and victorious thought would be, he was a good man, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. He was a character which you did not need to analyze; you felt what he was. He looked it, he radiated it, he spoke it. He was always at one with himself. His earnest voice was the index of an earnest nature. His passionate outbursts were the index of a soul which loathed injustice, trickery, baseness of every kind. His pure countenance was the mirror of a pure heart.

Dear friends, it is a great thing that we have known and loved this man. It is a good thing that for years you have lived in the same city with him and under his influence. We remember his presence, his manner, gesture, look, even if every word he spoke has vanished from our memory. He is and will be a blessing to us all. His death is one of the greatest of mysteries, gone like a tree filled with half-ripe fruit, stricken by lightning, and perishing instantly in its beauty and promise. The world seems poorer to-day than it did when he was here, but heaven is richer, and there is one more reason why we should live holier lives.

“Another hand is beckoning us,  
Another call is given,  
And glows once more with angel steps  
The path that leads to heaven.

“Fold him, O Father, in Thine arms,  
And let him henceforth be  
A messenger of love between  
Our human hearts and Thee.

“Still let his mild rebuking stand  
Between us and the wrong,  
And his dear memory serve to make  
Our faith in goodness strong.”

My friends of this beloved and bereaved church, I need not remind you of your great loss, for you know it well. I need not tell his family what he was to them, for they remember only too vividly his brightness, his tenderness, his wisdom, and his devotion. You have been called upon to exercise a very uncommon faith in God ; for just at the time when, through the earnest and faithful labors of your minister, this church seemed ready to enter into a new harvest season, he was not, for God took him. At no period of his career was he so amply appreciated as during his New Britain ministry. A whole church, a whole city surrounded him with an enthusiastic love which, I need not tell you, was most grateful to him. You may be glad, and you will be glad for years on years, that you had this noble man with you to radiate that fire which used to warm your hearts and animate your lives. You may be grateful for the opportunity of giving to him the welcome which you did extend to him. He came among you at an hour when he specially needed that loving support, and you entertained him as a man of God, sent providentially to you, rich in experience, cultured in mind, true in heart. Briefly he did his work with you, leaving a ministry rich in goodly memories. Your children loved him, your aged saints found comfort in him, you all looked upon him as a man of God. He was a strong man in all senses of the word, a leader in the ministry, as well as a beloved pastor. His last public address, given at New Haven, just on the very verge of his final illness, was received as a message of rare worth, a token of a rich and thoroughly furnished soul. His was a bright and glorious track, luminous all the way from that New Hampshire village through Dover, and Providence, and Westfield, and Hartford, and New Britain,—a line of varying successes, judged by

man's standard, but shining throughout with the lustre of a rare and noble character.

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The Sabbath after Dr. Richardson's death the pastor of the First Church of Hartford preached a sermon from Acts xi, 29, "And his sepulchre is with us unto this day."

The theme of the sermon was the benefits which come to men from the remembrance of the virtuous dead.

In the conclusion of the discourse the preacher said, "I have been led in this line of remark to-day, as you have all along perceived, by the fact of the death, this past week, of a man well known to most of you—the late pastor of this church. I have preferred to make the suggestions of this event general, however, more than special, for good reasons.

I was not myself very well acquainted with Dr. Richardson. Up to the time of my preaching the sermon at his installation here in April, 1872, I do not know as I had ever met him face to face. And my opportunities for personal intercourse with him since have been slight. Meantime, in all your hands to-day there is the memorial address at his funeral yesterday, by one of his associate pastors in this city,—an address which I take to be, in large measure, discriminating and just, as it certainly is warm and affectionate.

Another pastor—one who has had ample opportunities for knowing all the facts of Dr. Richardson's life and character—has given public notice to all, and special notice to us, that that character and life will be the theme of distinct portraiture this evening. To other hands than mine, therefore,—unless it be in some brief pages in that memorial volume of this church's history as a whole, which it is my hope some time to complete—I must leave any careful depicting of the character and estimation of the work of our friend.

Nevertheless it cannot be without its appropriateness that a few words be said in conclusion, even by me. Dr. Richardson was the thirteenth in the line of this church's pastors or teachers. He is the eleventh to have passed on beyond the veil. He is the only one of all the eleven who does not sleep in Hartford soil. His term of ministerial service in this church was six years and eight months. He came to that term of service at forty-four years of age and he gave to it the best energies of which his mind and heart were capable. He had previous pastoral relationships, all somewhat brief, all marked by zealous endeavor; and all, though brief, by useful and lasting results. So also in an eminent degree was his pastorate here. I know that the test of the admission of members to the church is a very imperfect test to apply to ministerial usefulness. I know that the period of Dr. Richardson's pastorate included one of a considerable revival in New England and the especial effort here of Moody and Pentecost and the Tabernacle. But of the one hundred and sixty persons who joined this church in the six and a half years of Dr. Richardson's pastorate, certainly a very considerable number must be regarded (speaking in our crude way of spiritual results) as the direct fruit of his ministry. Many there are to-day in this fellowship to whom he was the spiritual father. To many others here, he was always an interesting and instructive teacher in religious things. They received from him constant impulse to better living and better serving in Christ's cause.

No man could, I suppose, have carried about with him a sincerer heart; and seldom any kinder. He never spared himself if he could serve others. He was unwearied in his endeavors to be of use, to be a helper, to be a comforter, and to be so especially to the poor. He was pre-eminently

democratic in his tastes and sympathies. He loved common men and women, in plain garb and homely surroundings, better than the rich and fashionable. Something of this was instinctive with him; something a kind of principle. He had his reward. He was loved warmly in return. In many and many a home in the by-streets and humble apartments of this town his picture may be seen, and his name is spoken with tender emotion. He came nearer to those homes and hearts than many another man equally sincere, and equally earnest possibly could, by the touch of an original constitutional sympathy with hard and homely phases of human life.

And so he had here what must be accounted by the severest of tests a successful ministry.

Yet it is not wrong to say that something in his original make and in the historic make of this church, prevented the full realization here of such a pastoral relation as he was capable of. He could have surroundings more suited to his happiness and his usefulness. And God gave them to him. His last pastorate was his happiest pastorate. I do not know that he won more souls to Christ in New Britain than in Hartford, or than he had done in Dover or Westfield. But there was his happiest home. Something in the more responsive, perhaps less self-conscious, temperament of that society, gave him an access and satisfaction, to a certain extent lacking here. Over that grave, on which the flowers yet lie unwithered, I may say frankly that I do not think the responsibility was wholly his (though his, doubtless, owing to constitutional limitations, in part) that this pastorate was not the fully happy one it might have been. Perhaps he lived a good deal a stranger, after all, among you. Perhaps the man who preached to your households, who

baptized your children and buried your dead, was not the man you gave much sense of fellowship to, nevertheless.

But God gave that to him. It makes me glad at heart to think how warm and general and sincere is the mourning in our neighbor town to-day, over the man whom they will see no more. Glad at heart, I say, for he had a rather checkered life; with too many dark spots on the board; but he died as any man might pray God to die, in the full tide of happy usefulness and honor.

And so the thirteenth pastor of this long succession has gone onward, to meet the waiting company of his predecessors and the great fellowship of the flock they have in their generations tended and led toward the better country. Among those ten predecessors who have entered that country before him, there were doubtless several who were abler men, more powerful preachers, of larger resources, more controlling will and heavier impressing personality. But I doubt if there were among them all a man of truer-hearted purpose to live to God's honor and man's good, than he who follows last in that company.

He had not a more choleric temper than Hooker, nay, perhaps than Hawes, and he repented as sincerely as did those good men, if at any time he showed a hasty spirit. More than some of his predecessors he carried a hampering weight in a certain over-sensitiveness to the opinions of others, which to some extent embarrassed him and put him at a disadvantage.

But spite of whatever infirmities of human nature may sometimes have been recognized in him, I do not believe that the surviving congregations of any of the ten ministers who have preached to the First Church of Hartford were more sure that their dead pastor had gone to Heaven as

“his own place,” the only place he could go to, than you are to-day.

Let us leave him there in their company, and in His company who brought them all there, as the dying first one of them all said, “not by merit but by mercy.”

Their memories and their sepulchres abide. Let us thank God for what He gave to this church through any of them. And let the recollection that they have gone before us strengthen our hearts, till we join the society of those who being made “just” here, are made “perfect” yonder.

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As a token of the esteem in which Dr. Richardson was held, the following resolutions and minutes are appended :

SOUTH CHURCH, NEW BRITAIN.

“WHEREAS God, in His infinite wisdom, has removed by death the pastor of our sister church, Rev. E. H. Richardson, D.D., therefore

*Resolved*, That while we remember with gratitude the pure character, earnest life, and eminent usefulness of Dr. Richardson, and recognize our own great loss as a church, to which he has occasionally ministered, and as members of the community in which he lived, we especially express our heartfelt sympathy with the church of which he was pastor, and pray that this seemingly irreparable loss may be attended by rich spiritual blessings from the great Head of the Church.

*Resolved*, That we desire to express our profound sympathy with the afflicted family in their bereavement, and commend each member to the Divine Being who was the trust of the deceased, and who is the widow’s God and a father to the fatherless.”

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, NEW BRITAIN.

“The pastor and official board of the Methodist Episcopal Church, New Britain, desire to express for themselves, and in behalf of the entire congregation, their profound sorrow on account of the death of Rev. E. H. Richardson, D.D.

His eminent Christian character and distinguished abilities were the common inheritance and pride of all the churches of the city.

Stricken down in the midst his years, and in the maturity of his influence, the entire community suffers a most painful loss.

While we bow in humble submission to the divine will, we extend our prayerful sympathies to his deeply bereaved family and to the afflicted church of which he was the honored and beloved pastor."

#### CENTRAL CONFERENCE.

MERIDEN, Oct. 10, 1883.

Whereas, since our last meeting, our Heavenly Father, in his infinite wisdom, has removed by death the pastor of one of the churches here represented, this Conference adopts the following minute as an expression of its regard for the deceased, and of its sympathy with the bereaved church and afflicted family:

Rev. Elias H. Richardson, D.D., late pastor of the First Church of Christ, New Britain, passed from his earthly labors to his heavenly rest, June 27, 1883, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and the thirtieth of his public ministry.

Manly and conscientious as a Christian citizen, earnest and faithful as a preacher, and tender and loving as a pastor, he was instrumental, in God's hands, of building up and strengthening the churches to which he successively ministered, and of shedding a brightening light in the communities in which he lived. He brought to his work a richness of spiritual power, and a loving interest in the welfare of those about him, that made his example and teachings a blessing to the church and the world.

In his death, this Conference loses a much esteemed and valued member, whose sincere and earnest words have ever commanded attention, and whose memory will be cherished with affection and gratitude.

To the bereaved church of which he was the beloved pastor, and to the afflicted family of the deceased, this Conference tenders its sympathy, praying the great Head of the Church to bring to each all needed comfort and rich spiritual blessings.

The following letter from the church at Dover, of which Dr. Richardson was pastor twenty years ago, will speak for

itself. It is certainly a remarkable tribute to a pastor's fidelity that such testimony was given so long after the pastoral relation terminated. It may be added that provision was made by the same church for procuring a faithful crayon likeness of their former pastor.

DOVER, N. H., July 5, 1883.

MY DEAR MRS. RICHARDSON :

You have already, through friends here, been made acquainted with the deep grief felt by the people of Dover, first at the severe illness of your husband, and later by the news of his sudden death. Before this reaches you, you will have learned that last Sabbath the pulpit of our church was draped, and that Prof. Churchill, who occupied it, made touching allusions to your husband's decease in the long prayer, and selected for the second hymn a memorial one. The whole congregation, which was large, was in deepest sympathy with the impressive services.

At our Tuesday evening weekly meeting allusion was made to your husband's faithful ministry with us by all that took part, and it was voted, all rising, that an expression of our affection for your husband, and of our sincere sympathy for you and your family in this hour of sorest trial, should be sent to you.

This painful duty was assigned to me. Would that I could speak as I would like, and as I feel I ought, adequately to express the feelings of our people. But my words are not necessary to make you understand all this. Others have already told you before now how our hearts bleed. Affection that outlives twenty years must be real. I know of no one of the worthy men who have filled this pulpit that had a warmer hold on the affections of this people, and whose name was more frequently and lovingly mentioned than was your husband's. Memory will ever hold his faithful ministry here imperishable.

With one heart would we all commend you and yours to the tender care of the Great Head of the Church, and, as far as human sympathy can sustain, would we join the many friends you have in all the places where your husband was called to labor.

With sincere sympathy for you and yours, believe me,

Your friend,

JAS. H. WHEELER.

The following preamble and resolutions were adopted by the New Britain Ministers' Meeting, Monday, Sept. 24, 1883, the meeting being composed of the Congregational, Methodist, and Baptist clergymen of the city and vicinity :

*Whereas*, since our last meeting one of our number, Rev. Dr. E. H. Richardson, Pastor of the Center Church, has been removed by death, it is our pleasure to place on record our high appreciation of his talents and genuine ability as a Christian minister. His earnest enthusiasm, his pure, godly life, his fearless presentation of God's truth, made him a minister of God, honored, respected, and beloved by all.

As brethren in the ministry, associated with him in Christian work, we learned to respect and love him, and we deeply regret his removal so suddenly from the church which loved him, and from this community which he served so faithfully, both as a citizen and a minister of Christ.

The following testimonial was offered by the Connecticut Congregational Club, of which Dr. Richardson was an honored member, at its meeting December 18th :

God having removed from us by death our beloved brother, Rev. Elias H. Richardson, D.D., a member of this Club, we desire to put on record the following memorial :

1. He was a faithful student of God's word and of whatever would throw light upon it; a vigorous and conscientious thinker; a careful but progressive theologian, studying devoutly the works of the great Christian thinkers of the past, and not less devoutly looking for whatever new light may break forth from the Gospel in the present. He was an energetic and effective preacher; a winner of souls whose whole intense nature, fired by grace, was in the work of saving men and glorifying Christ; an humble Christian who drank deep, and as the years passed by, ever deeper draughts from the fountain of spiritual life. We rank him high among the ministers of his generation. We cherish his memory with gratitude and mourn the loss of a brother respected and beloved.

2. The Church of which he was last pastor have lost, in the very prime of his usefulness, this wise and faithful leader, this man

of large heart and large sympathies. It would be impossible to say whether his love for them or their love for him was greater. His last pastorate, he was wont to say, was his happiest, and his last work was probably his best and most effective. His last months were months of very rapid growth in likeness to his Lord. Those who were familiar with him then felt that God was fitting him for more effective service on earth. But we must bow reverently before the majesty of that wisdom and love which decreed that this should be his preparation for the higher service of Heaven.

3. The family who have suffered in this sore bereavement are assured of our warmest sympathy. We commend them to Him who has declared and shown himself to be the God of the widow and the fatherless.













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